

### **EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT**

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Kao H. Lu, Esquire on May 2, 2008.

The application has been amended as follows:

In claim 1, in line 1, after "a shelf connector" inserted --for mounting a shelf on a supporting rod--.

In claim 1, in line 2, after "a sliding sleeve (1)" inserted --mounted on a supporting rod, the sliding sleeve--.

In claim 1, in line 5, after "portion (12a/12c)" inserted --projecting outwardly from the sliding sleeve--.

In claim 1, in line 5, after "at least one" inserted --recessed--.

In claim 1, in line 7, after "a locking sleeve (2)" inserted --connected to a shelf, the locking sleeve--.

In claim 1, in line 7, after "locking groove (21)" inserted -- , the locking sleeve being received on the sliding sleeve within the introducing section such that--.

In claim 1, in line 8, after "open groove (11)" deleted "being urged to reduce by the" and replaced with --is compressively reduced by--.

In claim 1, in line 8, after "insertion of the clasp" deleted "portion" and replaced with --portions--.

In claim 1, in line 11, before "an open structure for" deleted "is" and replaced with --comprising--.

In claim 1, in line 11, after "clasp on" deleted "a" and replaced with --the--.

In claim 1, in line 12, after "open groove (11)" deleted "is axially provided with a" and replaced with --comprising an axially extending--.

In claim 1, in line 13, after "shaft-and-pin mechanism" inserted --for pivotally opening and closing the sliding sleeve to receive the supporting rod--.

In claim 1, in line 14, after "the hinge (13)" deleted "is axially provided with a rib (15)" and replaced with --comprising an integrally formed axially extending rib (15) which frictionally engages the supporting rod--.

In claim 1, in line 15, after "of the hinge (13)" inserted --on the supporting rod--.

Canceled claims 4, 6 and 7.

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

As to claim 1, Yang (US 6,253,933) discloses the claimed shelf connector with the exception of comprising a sliding sleeve comprising at least one recessed introducing section being provided on the sliding sleeve above the clasp portion; and a locking sleeve having a single locking groove, the locking sleeve being received on the sliding sleeve within the introducing section such that a width of the open groove is compressively reduced by insertion of the clasp portions into the locking groove,

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wherein a width of the locking groove is slightly smaller than a width of the clasping portions, the sliding sleeve comprising an open structure for directly clasping on the supporting rod; the inner wall of the sliding sleeve adjacent to the hinge comprising an integrally formed axially extending rib for positioning the opening and closing actions of the hinge on the supporting rod.

There is no teaching or suggestion, absent the applicant's own disclosure, for one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the shelf connector disclosed by Yang to have the above mentioned elemental features. Furthermore, such modifications would yield unexpected and unpredictable results.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to MICHAEL P. FERGUSON whose telephone number is (571)272-7081. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (6:30am-3:00pm).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Daniel P. Stodola can be reached on (571)272-7087. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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MPF  
05/02/08

/Michael P. Ferguson/  
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3679